

Teacher's Guide

The Great Egret Family on Ruby Lake

We provide teachers with teaching techniques to foster comprehension and word reading. We organize our lessons in three parts:

- **before** reading the text,
- **during** reading the text, and
- **after** reading the text.

The final part includes word analyses, synonyms, antonyms and grammar lessons too.

Story #1: Great Egret Fishes in the Lake

It is springtime on the lake.

Great egret wades in shallow water at the edge of the lake.

The lake is filled with big turtles, scaly snakes, plump frogs and juicy fish.

He stands still and hovers over the water searching back and forth for food.

A little snake slithers by three little fish.

He dips his bill in the water.

Great egret grabs one tiny fish with his bill.

The fish wiggles back and forth.

Great egret puts his head back and swallows the fish headfirst.

GULP! Down it goes.

BEFORE Reading the Text

- Show the picture to the children and encourage predictions of the story's content.
- Use the sign for "title" and read the title of the first story.
- Discuss the authors and illustrator.
- Allow the children to discuss with the teacher and each other their own experiences related to seeing birds in your yard or in a park.
- Discuss the type of text the children will be viewing in sign and reading. (a real informational story).
- Teacher shows pictures from the internet that include great egrets on the lake, bayou, swamp).
- Teacher asks children to compare size of the egrets with each other. (how tall they are? How long are their necks?)
- Set a purpose for viewing and reading the story (to learn about a kind of waterbird, the great egret).

DURING Reading the Text

- To get at meaning first (comprehension), the teacher signs the whole story in ASL (or student can access the whole story on the PPT slide).
- Teacher repeats the signing of the whole story and asks the children to sign along with her. The children and teacher support each other in their signing of the story. Repeat as needed.
- Teacher fingerscans the title. The children are instructed to model her.
- Focusing on meaning, teacher asks each student to sign the title to the class.
- Teacher fingerscans each sentence (10) on the slides and the children model her.

AFTER Reading the Text

- Encourage children to act out the story.
- Have the children practice retelling the story to each other providing peer-prompting when they forget an item in the story.
- Review the story parts: character (great egret), setting (lake), problem (finding food), goal (eating food), resolution (success! caught a fish).
- Help children make connections between the events with the main character and children observing birds in their own backyards.
- In pairs, have children choose photos of great egrets from the internet and make up their own story using the words in this story.

Comprehension and Word Decoding Activities

Pair Reading/Signing

Encourage students to work in pairs. The children then practice signing each sentence alternating each sentence in the story with each other.

Sequencing

Cut up the 10 sentences in the story and scramble their order. Then, place the sentences in the correct sequence.

It is springtime on the lake.

Great egret wades in shallow water at the edge of the lake.

The lake is filled with big turtles, scaly snakes, plump frogs and juicy fish.

He stands still and hovers over the water searching back and forth for food.

A little snake slithers by three little fish.

He dips his bill in the water.

Great egret grabs one tiny fish with his bill.

The fish wiggles back and forth.

Great egret puts his head back and swallows the fish headfirst.

GULP! Down it goes.

Word Work

Nouns for bodies of water

This story takes place on a *lake*. Lead the class in a discussion about other bodies of water such as: a *bayou, marsh, swamp, gulf, river, creek, ocean, sea*.

Have children make a bulletin board with pictures of each body of water.

Have children practice fingerspelling the “water” words and explain their meaning to the class.

For example:

fingerspell B-A-Y-O-U then sign AREA WATER MOVES SLOW WHERE? SOUTH US FILLED WITH PLANTS.

Words that sound like action they show.

Review this sentence:

GULP! Down it goes.

GULP! Sounds like swallowing food.

CRASH! Sounds like breaking an object.

BOOM! Sounds like a big explosion.

Have children think of other words that sound like their meaning and compose other sentences.

Verbs, verb phrases or action words

Ask children to act like they are an egret and show actions.

Great egret wades in shallow water.

Great egret stands still and hovers over the water searching back and forth for food.

Great egret dips his bill in the water.

Great egret grabs one tiny fish with his bill.

Great egret puts his head back and swallows the fish headfirst.

Ask children to act like they are a girl and show actions.

The girl wades in shallow water.

The girl stands still and hovers over the water searching back and forth for food.

The girl dips his hand in the water.

The girl grabs one tiny fish with her hand.

The girl puts her head back and swallows the soda pop.

After these acting out activities lead children in a discussion about how the sign changes when the subject of the action changes from waterbird to a girl.

Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe something about the noun.

Review the examples in the story with the children.

Great egret wades in **shallow water** at the edge of the lake.

The lake is filled with **big turtles, scaly snakes, plump frogs** and **juicy fish**.

A **little snake** slithers by **three little** fish.

Have the children make up their own sentences using the adjectives in the story sentences.

Grammar Work

Nouns & Verbs: adding s

The morpheme –s.

The morpheme s is often confusing for deaf children.

Rule 1: After a noun, the s means more than one.

Examples from story 1:

The lake is filled with big **turtles**, scaly **snakes**, plump **frogs** and juicy fish.

Rule 2: After verb, the s means a singular subject.

Great egret **wades** in shallow water at the edge of the lake.

He stands still and **hovers** over the water searching back and forth for food.

A little snake **slithers** by three little fish.

He **dips** his bill in the water.

Great egret **grabs** one tiny fish with his bill.

The fish **wiggles** back and forth.

Great egret **puts** his head back and swallows the fish headfirst.

GULP! Down it **goes**.

Explain the rule to the children and use the story sentences to provide examples.

Have the children fingerspell each key word paying attention to the last letter, s.

Have the children make up their own sentence using the words.

Tenses

Students can change the story to the past tense and discuss how words change in spelling.

Here we cross out the present tense and add the past tense in the blue color.

It ~~is~~ **was** springtime on the lake.

Great egret ~~wades~~ **waded** in shallow water at the edge of the lake.

The lake ~~is~~ **was** filled with big turtles, scaly snakes, plump frogs and juicy fish.

He ~~stands~~ **stood** **still** and ~~hovers~~ **hovered** over the water searching back and forth for food.

A little snake ~~slithers~~ **slithered** by three little fish.

He ~~dips~~ **dipped** his bill in the water.

Great egret ~~grabs~~ **grabbed** one tiny fish with his bill.

The fish ~~wiggles~~ **wiggled** back and forth.
 Great egret ~~puts~~ **put** his head back and ~~swallows~~ **swallowed** the fish headfirst.
 GULP! Down it ~~goes~~ **went**.

Regular and Irregular Verbs

Discuss how English verbs can be regular and form the past tense by added –ed. They can also double the last consonant as in dips-dipped, grabs-grabbed. Verbs can also be irregular where they change to a new word (is-was, goes-went).

Is- was (irregular verb)
 Wades-waded (regular verb)
 Stands-stood (irregular verb)
 Hovers-hovered (regular verb)
 Slithers-slithered (regular verb)
 Dips-dipped (regular verb)
 Grabs-grabbed (regular)
 Wiggles-wiggled (regular)
 Puts-put (irregular)
 Swallow-swallowed (regular)
 Goes-went (irregular)

ASL and English Bilingual strategies to teach vocabulary

1. Chaining

Chaining is a bilingual ASL and English technique that supports vocabulary acquisition. Chaining shows equivalency of meaning using a sign, fingerspelling, writing, pictures, and gestures with no specific order or sequence.¹

Example:

Great egret

Picture (of great egret) + fingerspelling (G-R-E-A-T E-G-R-E-T) + writing word, great egret + signing GREAT EGRET (LONG NECK WING BILL)

Chose these words and create chaining sequences:

Nouns: springtime, lake, water, edge, turtles, snakes, frogs, fish, food, bill, head.

Verbs: wades, is filled, stands, hovers, searching, slithers, dips, grabs, wiggles, puts, swallows, goes

Adjectives: shallow, big, scaly, plump, juicy, little, three, tiny.

¹ Humphries & MacDougall (1999)

2. Sandwiching²

Similar to chaining, **sandwiching** uses a purposeful sequence of equivalent meaning using sign, fingerspelling, writing, pictures, and gestures to introduce a concept or a word. With this sequence the first and third expression are the same and an equivalent is “sandwiched” between them.

For example,

Great egret is fingerspelled in first and third expression and the written word is “sandwiched” between them.

fingerspelled G-R-E-A-T E-G-R-E-T + written word, great egret + fingerspelled G-R-E-A-T E-G-R-E-T

Or

written word *great egret* + fingerspelled G-R-E-A-T E-G-R-E-T + written word *great egret*

Chose these words and create **sandwiching** sequences using combinations of signs, fingerspelling, picture, writing, and gestures:

Nouns: springtime, lake, water, edge, turtles, snakes, frogs, fish, food, bill, head.

Verbs: wades, is filled, stands, hovers, searching, slithers, dips, grabs, wiggles, puts, swallows, goes

Adjectives: shallow, big, scaly, plump, juicy, little, three, tiny.

3. Preview-Review-View (PVR)³

With this strategy, the teacher alternates the two languages for purposes of previewing, viewing and reviewing the reading lesson.

Preview: provide a summary of the story in ASL

View: read the story in English

Review: teachers and students use signing to review the story and ask and answer questions about it.

² Humphries & MacDougall (1999)

³ Li, Y. (2006).

Writing Activities

1. Using the photo album accompanying this teachers' guide, select two or three photographs of the great egrets and write your own story using the vocabulary you have learned in this first story.